



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH

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**Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene  
Mental Hygiene Administration**

**Spring Grove Hospital Center • Dix Building  
55 Wade Avenue • Catonsville, Maryland 21228**

**Martin O'Malley, Governor – Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor – John M. Colmers, Secretary**

**Brian M. Hepburn, M.D., Executive Director**

**To: Residential Treatment Centers, Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities**

**From: Brian Hepburn, M.D.  
Executive Director  
Mental Hygiene Administration**

**Date: November 1, 2010**

**Re: Billing for Therapeutic Leave Days**

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In order to fully comply with federal inpatient psychiatric services regulations, COMAR 10.09.25.05F, which prohibited reimbursement for therapeutic leave absence (TLA) days, has been deleted. Residential Treatment Centers (RTCs) and Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTFs) may include therapeutic leave of absence (TLA) day as a covered and reimbursable service.

A TLA is defined as any period in which a client leaves the facility and is absent overnight as well as subsequent, consecutive calendar days. Absence of a client may be attributed to medical care which cannot be performed on-site, a home/family visit, or another outside activity consistent with the individual's plan of care,<sup>1</sup> with the expectation that the client will return to the facility.

The medical necessity of the TLA must be documented in the client's medical record, in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws.<sup>2</sup> The date and time a client leaves and returns to the facility also must be documented. A visit to an emergency department which spans midnight is reimbursable as a TLA.

**Rates:** Effective July 1, the reimbursement rate for RTCs and PRTFs was adjusted based on the actual average percentage or average number of leave days reported by each institution to comply with applicable state and federal regulations.

**Limitations:** TLA is limited to 72 hours in any seven (7) day period for non-hospitalization. Leaves of absence exceeding 72 hours must be preauthorized by ValueOptions®.

Unauthorized leaves of absence by the client are not reimbursable as a regular day or as a TLA day.

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<sup>1</sup> In accordance with COMAR 10.21.03 and 10.09.29.01B(7).

<sup>2</sup> In accordance with 42 CFR §§ 441.155 and 447.40, and COMAR 10.09.29.